

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

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R 191506Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7509

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION BERLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: CONTROVERSY IN CDU PRESIDUM

1. HELMUT KOHL HAS CAUSED A SHARP THOUGH SHORT CONTRO-
VERSY WITHIN THE CDU BY NOMINATING WALTHER LEISLER KIEP,
THE PARTY'S TREASURER AND THUS EX OFFICIO A MEMBER OF THE
CDU'S TWELVE-MAN PRESIDUM, TO BE THE PRESIDUM'S FOREIGN
POLICY SPOKESMAN, REPLACING GERHARD SCHROEDER WHO IS NO
LONGER A PRESIDUM MEMBER. THE CONTROVERSY CENTERS ON
THE ARGUMENT THAT KIEP IS TOO LIBERAL TRULY TO REPRESENT
A CONSENSUS OF CDU OPINION, BUT IT IS ALSO VIEWED AS A
SLIGHT TO CARSTENS, ALSO EX OFFICIO A PRESIDUM MEMBER,
THE ONE WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN, AT LEAST SUPERFICIALLY, A
MORE LOGICAL CHOICE.

2. KOHL WAS AWARE THAT HIS SELECTION OF KIEP WOULD BE
SHARPLY CRITICIZED IN THE PARTY, BUT HE ALSO KNOWS THAT
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HIS BLANDNESS AND COMPARATIVE SILENCE THUS FAR SINCE HIS

ELECTION AS PARTY CHAIRMAN ARE BEGINNING TO BE THE SOURCE OF DAMAGING HUMOR IN THE CDU AND THAT, FURTHER, HIS MAIN CURRENT RIVAL FOR THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF HIS PARTY COLLEAGUES IS CARSTENS.

3. PREDICTABLY THE CONTROVERSY WAS OVER BY SEPTEMBER 19, THE DAY AFTER IT BEGAN, SIMPLY BECAUSE THE CDU, ALREADY WIDELY CRITICIZED FOR AN INABILITY TO AGREE ON ANYTHING, COULD HARDLY AFFORD A PUBLIC DEBACLE OVER SOMETHING AS ESSENTIALLY UNIMPORTANT AS THE PRESIDUM'S FOREIGN POLICY SPOKESMAN. KOHL HELPED SMOOTH MATTERS BY SAYING HE DID NOT AGREE WITH SOME OF KIEP'S RATHER SYMPATHETIC REMARKS IN THE PAST ABOUT OSTPOLITIK AND BY HIS SUGGESTION THAT CARSTENS COORDINATE FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN THE PARTY AND ITS BUNDESTAG FRAKTION, A SUGGESTION CARSTENS HAS ACCEPTED. THUS KIEP WILL MOST PROBABLY BE ELECTED WITHOUT MUCH FURTHER ADO.

4. COMMENT: THE CONTROVERSY OVER KIEP'S NOMINATION BY KOHL IS BUT ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE LEFT-RIGHT SPLIT IN THE CDU WHICH WILL BE AT THE CENTER OF THE PARTY'S CONVENTION IN HAMBURG IN NOVEMBER. KOHL IS CLEARLY PREPARING TO MOVE THE PARTY A STEP LEFTWARDS JUST AS HE THOUGHT HE WOULD TWO AND A HALF YEARS AGO AT DUESSELDORF. WHETHER HE CAN OR NOT WILL BE QUESTION NUMBER ONE FOR THE CDU FOR THE NEXT TWO MONTHS.
HILLENBRAND

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